

INVESTMENT ADVISOR

By Mark Nelson

A MANAGED SERVICES AGREEMENT PROVIDES ACCESS TO MUCH MORE THAN IT SUPPORT AND MAINTENANCE.

THE CLIENT.

The client is a Chicago-based investment advisory firm that provides the highest level of independent investment counsel to wealthy individuals, families, and foundations.

IT SUPPORT TO SUIT A GROWING ORGANIZATION.

The client outsourced the management of its IT infrastructure, applications, and support to a small, Chicago-based firm. As the investment advisory organization grew, it needed a managed services partner that offered:

- ◆ Strong technical capabilities
- ◆ Financial services industry experience
- ◆ Understanding of IT processes and data security
- ◆ Strategic IT thought leadership

In addition, the firm sought a customer service-oriented partner that could respond to and resolve issues quickly and implement solutions that would prevent repeat IT problems.

The firm selected West Monroe Partners as its new managed services partner. West Monroe Partners offered deep technical expertise, broad capabilities, and the ability to support the firm beyond basic infrastructure and support-desk services. In addition to having a strong track record for providing managed services, West Monroe Partners also demonstrated deep industry expertise in the financial and wealth management sectors.

As the basis for making short- and long-term recommendations, West Monroe Partners assessed all aspects of the client's IT infrastructure, its environment, and its IT applications.

ACCESS TO A HOST OF STRATEGIC IT CAPABILITIES.

West Monroe Partners assumed responsibility for all IT support, proactive maintenance, and strategic projects—providing weekly and monthly proactive maintenance, on-call support for any issues, and IT strategy and budgeting.

Over several years of proactive support, West Monroe Partners implemented the right IT processes to improve the client's system uptime. In addition, it has:

- ◆ Implemented a new back-up solution that provides off-site storage in case of disaster.
- ◆ Performed a disaster recovery and business continuity project that ensures recovery of key applications within four hours.
- ◆ Implemented improved security practices and policies, including remote access device enforced passwords, encrypted laptops, an anti-spam/anti-virus hosted solution, improved password policies and desktop security, web site security and filtering, and a password management program.
- ◆ Implemented Microsoft Office SharePoint for one department—establishing the foundation for a longer-term organization-wide document management solution.
- ◆ Developed a QA and test environment for the firm's SQL, customer applications, and SharePoint environment—providing a better means to test and deploy application updates.

With the support of West Monroe Partners, the investment advisory firm has a much-improved support model and access to technicians who have not only deep technology expertise, but also the ability to communicate effectively at the executive level. As a trusted business partner, West Monroe Partners provides the client with IT strategy and budgeting assistance, as well as “bench strength” and a breadth of offerings for addressing key initiatives.

West Monroe Partners is an international, full-service business and technology consulting firm focused on guiding organizations through projects that fundamentally transform their business. With the experience to create the most ambitious visions as well as the skills to implement the smallest details of our clients' most critical projects, West Monroe Partners is a proven provider of growth and efficiency to large enterprises, as well as more nimble middle-market organizations. Our more than 300 consulting professionals drive better business results by harnessing our collective experience across a range of industries, serving clients out of offices across the United States and Canada.